

Digital Commons
@ LMU and LLS

Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice

Volume 14 | Issue 1

Article 2

8-31-2010

How in the World Do We Make a Difference? Getting to the Heart and Soul of Love and Work, by Norman Douglas, Lawrence Vuillemin, & Stephen Hallam

Patricia Sevilla

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/ce>

Recommended Citation

Sevilla, P. (2010). How in the World Do We Make a Difference? Getting to the Heart and Soul of Love and Work, by Norman Douglas, Lawrence Vuillemin, & Stephen Hallam. *Journal of Catholic Education*, 14 (1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.15365/joce.1401102013>

This Book Review is brought to you for free with open access by the School of Education at Digital Commons at Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. It has been accepted for publication in Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice by the journal's editorial board and has been published on the web by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons at Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. For more information about Digital Commons, please contact digitalcommons@lmu.edu. To contact the editorial board of Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice, please email CatholicEdJournal@lmu.edu.

background about typical public schools before describing what makes SWS unique. This book would be a great resource for administrators considering implementation of the SWS design. Catholic school administrators using this book should seek additional resources aimed at preserving the sense of community in their schools before adopting this design.

Chris DellaPorta serves as a middle school math and science teacher at St. George Parish Catholic School in Seattle, Washington.

How in the World Do We Make A Difference? Getting to the Heart and Soul of Love and Work

Norman Douglas, Lawrence Vuillemin, & Stephen Hallam
ACTA Publications, 2006
\$9.95, 109 pages

Reviewed by Patricia Sevilla

Frustration surrounding daily life is an obstacle every person faces at some point, and in *How in the World Do We Make a Difference?* authors Douglas, Vuillemin, and Hallam found that reflection and acceptance of God's role in life are the keys to moving past that stumbling block. The three authors come from different professions—the priesthood (Douglas), the world of law (Vuillemin), and education (Hallam), and have three different views of the world around them. Inspired by personal events and questions from friends and co-workers, their collected thoughts become a simple set of directions for helping find one's way when discerning one's place in this world. The book is not meant to give all the answers or dole out fulfillment, but to offer the reader an understanding of how to focus and evaluate the life they have. The individual gains knowledge from responding to queries posed, and applying that understanding to his or her own situations.

The creation of the book came about as a product of conversation between the three authors and is written in a style that involves the reader in that discussion. Because of the simplicity of the language and message, it is easily adaptable to a variety of audiences. Questions following each chapter promote open discussion or journal reflection. The school principal can enhance staff development with it as easily as the CEO, the pastor or ministry coor-

dinator can encourage faith formation within different church groups, or the struggling couple can read together and discuss how it applies to their lives.

How in the World Do We Make a Difference? focuses on four main questions: “Where in the world is our God? How in the world do we relate to one another? What in the world do we do, and why do we do it? How in the world do we make a difference?” (p. 15). Each chapter develops one question through personal stories and narrative explanations with key insights toward forming an answer. The margins include additional quotations from people—famous and everyday—that expound on the message the authors are trying to send.

Each chapter can be read separately if the reader feels drawn to one particular question over another. The ideal way to move through the book, however, is using the order provided. The reflections to each question build on one another to emphasize the main messages the authors are sending about the role of God and the role of one with the others.

The first question centers on the ultimate thing a person must accept: that God is first, and one must “begin this journey by acknowledging where most of us have found God in the past” (p. 31). The journey continues into the next question, which explores the book’s second central theme: the importance of developing relationships. “There are times when our greatest duty is to be present for others. We need to just be there, without trying to fix anything, allowing God to be present through us” (p. 51) because “in true friendship, our attention turns from self to other” (p. 67). After acknowledging the importance of God and the importance of relationships, only then can a person understand the significance of work, which could be one’s job, one’s role as a family member, or one’s role as a spouse. The authors ask the reader to reflect on her or his vocation, which “depends more on the matter of feeling called to do that kind of work than of the trade itself....We can see whatever work we do as an extension of God’s presence” (p. 80). Work combines both God and relationship, inviting a person to learn how to appreciate the impact made with their daily duties. “Once we see our job as bringing God’s love and message to the workplace, our mission is clear....Relationships—with God and with one another—are at the heart of what is really important at work” (p. 83). The final question is the most often asked, hence the title of the book. It culminates the lessons taught thus far about accepting God, relationships, and work. Leaders are people who combine all three, and differences are made by leaders. The stories come from famous leaders, like Winston Churchill and Jimmy Carter, alongside everyday people like Linda, the hospital clerk, and Father Karl. The authors explain that there are leaders of all types, and to remember that Jesus was not a winning general, CEO, or emperor. He was

“an example of someone who came from humble circumstances and lived in service to others” (p. 95).

For the everyday person, the most appealing aspect of the book is that the ultimate model of a person who made a difference in the world is Jesus. He is someone that anyone could befriend and walk with, not an untouchable, high-ranking political figure or distant celebrity. Alongside that, Douglas, Vuillemin, and Hallam present themselves as next door neighbors that suffered the same uncertainties as the reader with the humility to share how they muddled through the confusion. The reader sees that if those three were able to reach an understanding of their role in life, then perhaps the reader can do so as well.

For all those doubting, searching, or needing more, *How in the World Do We Make a Difference?* guides the direction that the journey should follow. This volume does not give research-based answers or statistical evidence proving the definitive steps to success. Instead, it encourages accepting one's faith, realizing that spirituality should pervade all aspects of a life that is meant to be lived for others. Only then will one be successfully satisfied. It endorses communication and asking for help, particularly reciting an easy prayer, “Lord, you are God, and I am not” (p. 23). With those words the burden is taken from the reader's shoulders and shared by a stronger power. Obstacles are no longer insurmountable, but a means of strengthening one's faith in God and in one another.

Patricia Sevilla is principal of Resurrection Catholic School in Jacksonville, Florida.

The Spiritual Apprenticeship of a Curious Catholic

Jerry Hurtubise
ACTA Publications, 2005
\$9.95, 96 pages

Reviewed by Carl Loesch

At the age of 13, Jerry Hurtubise was awakened by his mother in the middle of the night. His father had just had a massive heart attack. In that moment, he was thrust into the adult world. The author states